

## Education Update Winter 2002

Prepared by the Office of Senator Tom Harkin



Education played a prominent role throughout the 2001 legislative session which was capped off with passage of legislation reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The bill overhauls federal education programs to demand greater accountability. There is no question about the need to reform education in the United States, however school districts must now receive the resources to implement the legislation. The Harkin-Hagel amendment to fully fund special education passed the Senate. Despite a strong effort to maintain the provision, it was dropped from the bill due to strong opposition from House conferees.

The Senate underwent a historic mid-session shift returning Democrats to control of the chamber and Senator Harkin regained the chairmanship of the education appropriations subcommittee. The fiscal year 2002 appropriations bill was signed by the President on January 10 and provides a 16% increase for education. The legislation provides significant increases for critical education programs such as Title I, special education, a revamped Teacher Quality Program and a new Reading First Program. As a result of this legislation, federal funding to Iowa will increase.

- Special Education funding will increase by \$12.1 million to \$82.5 million
- Title I funding will increase by \$5.1 million to \$61.7 million
- Teacher Quality funding will increase \$5.9 million to \$22.2 million
- Iowa will receive \$5.7 million for the new Reading First Program
- Perkins Vocational Education funding will increase nearly \$1 million to \$13.3 million
- The maximum Pell Grant is increased to \$4000. Iowa funding increases by \$7.2 million

At Senator Harkin's request, the appropriations bill also includes funding for several specific Iowa projects including the Harkin School Construction Grant Program, the Iowa Star Schools Program, the on-line AP Academy and Loan Forgiveness for Teachers as well as funding for two new initiatives.

- \$50 million to continue and expand the Harkin School Construction Grant Program. This demonstration program began four years ago and during that period \$37 million was secured to repair and modernize Iowa school buildings. As a result, the federal funds have leveraged local resources to provide over \$500 million in improvements to schools.
- \$3 million for the Iowa Star Schools Program to help school districts with their connections to the Iowa Communications Network. This latest investment brings the total to \$47 million since 1992. Funds will be used to expand distance learning opportunities for Iowa students.
- \$2 million to expand a State-Federal partnership to keep teachers in Iowa. The FY 2002 bill doubled the federal contribution to the program administered by the Iowa College Student Aid Commission to provide forgivable loans for students preparing to teach.
- \$2 million to continue the new Academy to provide Advanced Placement courses on-line to Iowa high school students.
- \$1 million to the Iowa Department of Education to assist Iowa schools experiencing an increase in the number of students with limited English proficiency.
- \$500,000 for the Iowa Association of School Boards' Lighthouse for School Reform.